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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 1727
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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
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PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF
STATE HILL'S VISIT TO NORTH KOREA

LEAD STORIES: Monday morning's Tokyo Shimbun
front-paged Sunday morning's NHK-TV interview with PM
Abe, during which the premier stated his intention to
seek constitutional revision three years from now.

¶1. "Will DPRK Take Concrete Action?" An editorial in
the top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri commented (6/23):
"...Assistant Secretary of State Hill, the US
representative to the six-party talks, visited
Pyongyang for talks with Foreign Minister Pak and other
North Korean officials.... Last week, the DPRK
announced that it will accept the visit of IAEA
inspectors to the Yongbyon nuclear complex.... It is
only natural that the US should call on Pyongyang to
quickly implement the initial steps toward
denuclearization. The question is the extent to which
the North Koreans will act.... Diplomacy among the
members of the six-party talks will pick up if the DPRK
implements the initial steps. It remains to be seen,
however, whether the parties other than North Korea can
take concerted action. Different approaches on their
part would be to the advantage of Pyongyang. It is
important for Japan to work closely with the US on the
issue...."

¶2. "Keeping Close Watch on DPRK Actions" The liberal
Asahi editorialized (6/23): "...Assistant Secretary of
State Hill's visit to Pyongyang was a meaningful
development.... Should North Korea move toward
denuclearization, the other members of the six-party
talks, including the US and Japan, will also have to
take action. Even though North Korea reaffirmed its
commitment to implement the February six-party
agreement, there is littleroom for optimism that

everything will proceed smoothly. Work needs to begin on the provision of energy to North Korea and on diplomatic normalization. Although there are concerns in Japan that the abduction issue could be left behind, we are of the opinion that progress on the nuclear front will create an environment for resolving the abduction issue."

SCHIEFFER